FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

REVIEW PANEL MINUTES
SUMMER 2015

Date: June 18, 2015 @ Fairmont Hot Springs, Fairmont, MT

Attendees: Karin Boyd, Charlie Christman, Chuck Dalby, Nancy Winslow, Greg Munther, Clint Peck, Senator Jedediah Hinkle, Bill Semmens, Jim Stone, and Joseph Willauer

FWP staff: Michelle McGree, Jim Darling, and Jannice Richardson

Applicants and others in attendance: John & Mikell Bodner, Stan Bradshaw, Eric Leinonen, Ron Spoon, Ryen Neudecker, Jim Olsen, Jason Lindstrom, Paul Parson, Michael Bias, Matt Jaeger, Molly Barth, Pat Byorth, Jed Whiteley, Casey Hackathorne, Graveley family (Devil's Dip landowners), and Katie Tackett

Introductions were made and the group **approved agenda** as prepared.

Motion: Approve agenda as submitted
Motion Made by: Clint Peck
Motion Second by: Chuck Dalby
Panel Action: Yes unanimously

Review Future Fisheries balances as of 06/18/2015

$'s Available (unexpended and uncommitted)
RIT $ (native species): $1,008,064.81
License $ (General Future Fisheries Program): $292,568.20
Grand Total $ available: $1,300,633.01*

*This session is the first of four funding cycles within the biennium. The panel's objective is to find the best use of limited Program funds.

Panel Business
Project agreement protocol: In an effort to improve consistency and fairness, protocol regarding standard agreement duration was discussed. Standard agreement duration would be 20 years for funded projects, with exemptions requiring approval from the Review Panel. Exemptions would require a completed form.

Discussion Items:

- A 20-year agreement may not be feasible for some projects.
- The panel would decide if the 20-year term or a shorter term would be appropriate from one project to another.

- Panel would decide if an exemption is appropriate during the panel meeting, or by email vote after the panel meeting is completed.
- A written form with a signature from the Program Officer would be required for approval.

Motion: Make the 20-year agreement standard for projects that seek funding from Future Fisheries. Add clarity to the application form and directly address commitment to 20 years of maintenance. Make exceptions to the general rule subject to Panel approval and on a case-by-case basis.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Karin Boyd
Panel Action: Yes unanimously

Fencing recommendations: In the past, applicants have requested a wide range of fencing costs, and the Panel discussed funding consistency. The panel discussed fencing prices and the amount that will be allowed for Future Fisheries funding.

Discussion Items:

- Applicants request funding for various types of fences and costs can vary significantly.
- Applicants should know in the application process that they should adhere to general guidelines for fencing costs.

Motion: Use $1.50/linear foot as a cost reimbursement standard for fencing projects.
Motion Made by: Sen. Jedediah Hinkle
Motion Second by: Charlie Christman
Panel Action: Approve unanimously

Application Discussions:

1) BIG OTTER CREEK FENCING AND STOCK TANK (023-2015). Big Otter Creek (Judith Basin County) is a tributary to Belt Creek that supports populations of brook trout, brown trout, and rainbow trout. The project involves the rehabilitation of a highway underpass for livestock use, the building of a bridge, installation of fencing, and addition of a stock tank. The landowner will be using a new route to move cattle and intends to protect the stream from livestock impacts. The goal of this project is to prevent stream degradation and represents a proactive approach to protect the stream from imminent negative impacts. The applicant is requesting $7,028.55 in Program funds for construction materials and equipment, and plans to contribute $4,350 in in-kind services to the project. The total cost is $11,378.55. The request represents 62% of the total cost (38% match).

Amount Requested: $7,028.55
FWP Recommendation: $7,028.55
Project Representative: John & Mikell Bodner
Discussion Items:

- Purpose of the fence is to keep livestock out of the stream area.

- The existing underpass structure is in great shape.
- The fence configuration allows livestock to go through the underpass, but not stack up in front of it.
- The stock tank diverts extra water flow from the spring.
- There is support for the project from FWP Fish Biologist Jason Mullen.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $7,028.55.
Motion Made by: Clint Peck
Motion Second by: Greg Munther
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $7,028.55

2) BRAZIEL CREEK INSTREAM FLOW (024-2015). Braziel Creek (Powell County) is a tributary to Nevada Creek and supports a nearly pure strain of westslope cutthroat trout. Flow monitoring in the area indicated dewatering due to irrigation demand, and this project aims to lease water and secure minimum flows for resident fish. In this project, a lease of 0.5 cfs in a split-season water-rights lease will be obtained from the landowner, associated with reduced irrigation withdrawal. The goal of this project is to protect and enhance native fish habitat by securing additional water for instream flow. The applicant is requesting $12,400 in Program funds for monitoring, travel, and water lease purchases. They plan to contribute $48,432 for a total project cost of $60,832 (there is an error in the budget sheet). The request represents 20% of the total cost (80% match).

Amount Requested: $12,400
FWP Recommendation: $10,400
Project Representative: Stan Bradshaw
Discussion Items:

- Response is mixed and hard to tell if the 2013 cutthroat numbers have improved from previous years.
- DNRC will require flow monitoring. Monitoring will occur in April, May, and June.
- Future Fisheries funds are not used for monitoring costs. Currently there is $2,000 budgeted in the proposal for monitoring.
    - Huge part of river restoration is monitoring and measuring the results of the restoration.
    - Discussed the applicant moving monitoring funds elsewhere within the budget. However, questions were raised about whether or not moving funds for the applicant is appropriate.
    - The project representative will figure out how to fund the monitoring component without using Future Fisheries funds.
- The project has been funded twice by Columbia River dollars through BPA and will most likely be funded again.
- DNRC only approves water leases in 10-year increments and they can be renewed for an additional 10 years afterwards.

Motion: Approve the application for the amount of $10,400 as recommended.
Motion Made by: Sen. Jedediah Hinkle

Motion Second by: Joseph Willauer
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $10,400 (RIT)

3) CHERRY CREEK FISH PASSAGE (025-2015). Cherry Creek (Madison County) is a tributary to the Madison River and is now home to genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout. Nearly 62 miles of stream and 7 acres of lake habitat are now available to cutthroat trout due to the renovation work that has occurred in the drainage. This project, located within the westslope cutthroat trout restoration area, aims to connect the lowest portion of stream (8 miles) with the upper portion of stream (52+ miles). An irrigation structure currently separates the two sections. Downstream, a waterfall separates the restoration area from non-native species in the Madison River. The applicant proposes to install two rock-weir structures immediately downstream of the existing irrigation dam, which would create two ascending step pools. The step pools would allow westslope cutthroat trout to successfully pass over the barrier and allow unobstructed movement within the cutthroat trout restoration area. The applicant is requesting $7,080 in Program funds for construction materials and equipment mobilization. They plan to contribute $8,804 in matching funds for a total project cost of $15,884. The request represents 45% of the total cost (55% match).

Amount Requested: $7,080
FWP Recommendation: $7,080
Project Representative: Eric Leinonen
Discussion Items:

- Questions on the design and ensuring passage at all flow levels.
    - Project objective is to address the high flow times. Stream becomes intermittent above the barrier at low flow, so fish wouldn't be able to migrate at that time regardless.
    - Rock should provide interstitial spaces, so fish aren't stuck between the barrier and structures.
- Match for the project comes primarily from private funds.
- R.E. Miller out of Dillon will be performing the work.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $7,080.
Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby
Motion Second by: Charlie Christman
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $7,080 (RIT)

4) DEEP CREEK STREAMFLOW IMPROVEMENT (026-2015). Deep Creek (Broadwater County) is a tributary to the Missouri River near Townsend that primarily supports brown trout and rainbow trout, and has been the focus of restoration projects for many years. Sediment inputs, high temperatures, and reduced streamflow are all factors that have affected the stream. This project proposes to eliminate an open ditch and install a screened pump to deliver water to irrigators. The applicant predicts this will improve stream flow along two miles of Deep Creek, reduce water temperature, and eliminate fish

entrainment into the former ditch. The applicant is requesting $8,950 in Program funds for the irrigation pump and plans to contribute $129,000 in matching funds. The total project cost is $137,950. The request represents 6% of the total cost (94% match).

Amount Requested: $8,950
FWP Recommendation: $8,950
Project Representative: Ron Spoon
Discussion Items:

- The project site was chosen because it is an existing site (part of the diversion).
- FWP Water Rights Specialist Andy Brummond supports the project.
- A movement toward portable pumps lies with NRCS, and there are some restrictions.
- The water right is tied to the point of diversion and changes could affect other water users.
- There are four monitoring stations on the creek to ensure there is a gain of 3 cfs in the stream.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $8,950.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Clint Peck
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $8,950

5) DEVILS DIP SPRING CREEK CHANNEL RESTORATION (027-2015). Devil's Dip Spring Creek (Powell County) is a tributary to Nevada Spring Creek near Helmville. The Nevada Creek drainage has been the focus of past restoration projects that have resulted in improved habitat, decreased water temperature, and westslope cutthroat trout population enhancement. However, Devil's Dip Spring Creek remains isolated from Nevada Spring Creek. In this project, the Devil's Dip Spring Creek stream channel will be restored, the adjacent pond and wetlands areas will be isolated, fish passage will be improved, and the stream will be reconnected to Nevada Spring Creek. The goals of this project are to restore the spring creek, reconnect it to Nevada Spring Creek, and provide uninhibited fish passage through the restored reach. The applicant is requesting $8,500 in Program funds for oversight, labor, squash pipe, willow cuttings, and equipment. The applicant proposes to provide $21,810 in matching funds, and the total cost is $30,310. The request represents 28% of the total cost (72% match).

Amount Requested: $8,500
FWP Recommendation: $8,500
Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker
Discussion Items:

- Will the restored channel flow intersect diversions? There will be a siphon installed (agri drain).
- It was suggested that applicant consider using volunteer labor like Montana Conservation Corps.
    - They were not specifically contacted to work on the project, but the applicant has used similar groups in the past.
- The area around the pond adjacent to the stream will be elevated to maintain separation.
- There are no other diversions above the pond.
- The project will only use 15 hours of labor: excavator, willow planting, and culvert installation.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $8,500.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Charlie Christman
Panel Action: Yes unanimously (Jim Stone abstained)
Amount Approved: $8,500 (RIT)

6) FRENCH GULCH CHANNEL RESTORATION (028-2015). French Gulch (Deerlodge County) is a tributary to French Creek, which flows into Deep Creek and the Big Hole River. Placer mining activities occurred in the French Gulch drainage from the mid 19th century to the early 1890's, resulting in stream habitat that has been degraded by stream channel straightening, the presence of large dredge spoils, increased stream gradient, reduced riparian area width, and isolation of the stream from its floodplain. The purpose of this project is to restore habitat impacted by placer mining. Restoration activities include reconstructing of the floodplain and stream channel, redirecting the streamflow, and plugging the old channel. The new channel would be vegetated with transplanted material or bioengineering techniques. The goal is to increase the number of westslope cutthroat trout and arctic grayling in French Gulch by addressing the habitat limitations and potentially opening habitat to fluvial fish from French Creek. This project is upstream of the French Creek fish barrier project (003-2014). In Winter 2015, the applicant was awarded $113,000, primarily for Restoration Area 1 and Habitat Improvement Areas (006-2015). In the winter 2015 funding cycle, the applicant requested $200,000 in Program funds. The project was funded at $114,061 (57% of request, listed as $113,000 in the application) for Restoration Area 1 and Habitat Improvement Areas. The applicant is requesting $160,000 in Program funds for project design, oversight, construction management, and Restoration Areas 2-5. The applicant reports $868,000 in matching funds (82 % match), but without previous FFIP funds, it is a match of $755,000 (72% match). The total project cost is $1,053,961.

Amount Requested: $160,000
FWP Recommendation: Fund this project in a phased approach.
Project Representative: Jim Olsen
Discussion Items:

- It will take three years to remove the residual fish, which will begin before the project is completed. Reintroduction of westslope cutthroat trout and arctic grayling will begin after the project is completed. The new channel will be constructed in the dry.
- The barrier is a one-way trip for the fish. They cannot go back once they cross the barrier.
- Questions regarding whether the taxes and bonds listed in the construction estimate can be used as matching funds for the project. Unusual to have taxes and bonds split on the estimate.
- There is an error in the application. Willow cuttings are $4 and $5 in the different parts of the application.
- There are currently no populations of arctic grayling in the project area. There are cutthroat, rainbow, and brook trout.
- The large cost of this project cost was discussed.
    - C. Peck: uncomfortable with the cost/benefit ratio of the project.
    - C. Dalby: design is high quality and fits the scope of the project.

    - G. Munther: the project is typical for the costs of rebuilding a stream.
    - Does a phased approach translate to commitment to fund each phase?
    - MDT is already committed to building a stream crossing in the new channel. Would be a waste of money if project is not completed.
- The current, phased request for the project is $90,000. This is not the last phase of the project and the applicant plans to request additional funds in December 2015.

Motion: Approve the application with phased funding of $90,000.
Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby
Motion Second by: Greg Munther
Panel Action: Yes (8) / No (2)
Amount Approved: $90,000 (RIT)

7) LA MARCHE CREEK FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENT (029-2015). La Marche Creek (Powell County) is a headwaters stream in the Upper Clark Fork River basin that supports approximately 1.5 miles of westslope cutthroat trout habitat. Low population size has been attributed to habitat degradation and impaired movement, as a perched culvert currently divides the reach in two. This project aims to replace the perched culvert with a timber, clear-span bridge and allow unobstructed westslope cutthroat trout movement throughout La Marche Creek. The applicant is requesting $8,400 in Program funds for labor, construction materials, and equipment. The applicant proposes to provide $2,700 in matching funds for a total project cost of $11,100. The request represents 76% of the total project cost (24% match).

Amount Requested: $8,400
FWP Recommendation: $5,550
Project Representative: Jason Lindstrom
Discussion Items:

- The design for the wood bridge was proposed by Sun Mountain Lumber.
- A culvert would be more expensive.
- There is currently no financial support from the prison. They support the project, but are unable to contribute financially. Sun Mountain Lumber is not contributing.
- The panel discussed different options for the bridge. Treated lumber could be cheaper and more durable long-term. Suggestions were made for the applicant to reconsider the design and save some of the cost, especially if the other parties are not involved.

Motion: Approve the application for the amount of $5,550 as recommended.
Motion Made by: Nancy Winslow
Motion Second by: Chuck Dalby
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $5,550 (RIT)

8) MARTINA CREEK CHANNEL RESTORATION (030-2015). Martina Creek (Missoula County) is a tributary to Ninemile Creek and supports populations of westslope cutthroat trout and brook trout. It has been heavily altered by mining and some logging, and the creek contains dredge ponds, cascading channels, and braiding. The current impairments include impeded upstream fish migration, dredge ponds that contribute to increased water temperature, and placer mine tailings leading to sedimentation and impacted floodplains. This project aims to address these issues by moving large piles of dredge mining tailings, filling mining cutslopes and dredge ponds, and reconstructing the stream channel to connect Martina Creek to Ninemile Creek. The applicant is requesting $30,000 in Program funds for equipment and will provide $126,879.20 in matching funds, for a total cost of $156,879.20. The request represents 19% of the total project cost (81% match).

Amount Requested: $30,000
FWP Recommendation: $30,000
Project Representative: Paul Parson
Discussion Items:

- The goal is to restore the mainstream by reconnecting the tributaries, one at a time, to Ninemile Creek. There is no specific reason for choosing this creek over the others that need to be reconnected to the Ninemile. Previous projects have tackled other tributaries (Sawpit, Mattie V).
- The applicant was asked to use the new application form for future applications.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $30,000.
Motion Made by: Nancy Winslow
Motion Second by: Chuck Dalby
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $30,000 (RIT)

9) MOOSE CREEK RIPARIAN FENCING (031-2015). Moose Creek (Silver Bow County) is a tributary to the Big Hole River near Melrose that currently supports brook, rainbow, and brown trout but contains Yellowstone cutthroat trout upstream, above a barrier. The project involves the installation of 0.9 miles of wildlife-friendly, riparian fencing along Moose Creek, as part of a stewardship fence program. The applicant proposes a wildlife-friendly fence, and the cost includes bracing, gates, and water breaks. The goals of this project are to allow for natural bank stabilization, promote healthy channel geometry, reduce sediment inputs, and decrease water temperatures. The applicant is requesting $3,000 in Program funds for fence construction and plans to contribute $13,500 in matching funds to the project. The total cost is $16,500. The request represents 18% of the total cost (82% match).

Amount Requested: $3,000
FWP Recommendation: Table unless additional questions are answered.
Project Representative: Michael Bias
Discussion Items:

- Applicant submitted an addendum and discussed fencing costs. He is open to suggestions on cutting the cost of fence. J. Stone noted that a portion of the fence design is aesthetic and a straight fence would be cheaper.

- USFWS Fish Biologist Jim Magee supports the project with a NRCS grazing plan.
- Applicant agrees to develop a grazing plan, but J. Stone prefers a grazing strategy different from NRCS.
- Fish Biologist Jim Olsen confirmed that the project is not eligible for RIT funding.
- Landowner was not present to answer panel questions. Questions regarding compliance were attributed to a mistake made when the landowner was ill. The landowner reportedly is committed to complying with the terms of the project.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $3,000.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Joseph Willauer
Panel Action: Yes (9) / No (1)
Amount Approved: $3,000

10) POINDEXTER SLOUGH CHANNEL RESTORATION (033-2015). Poindexter Slough (Beaverhead County) is 4.7-mile-long channel of the Beaverhead River, located near Dillon, fed by a combination of groundwater and water diverted from the river. The project area supports a very popular fishery for rainbow trout and brown trout. FWP surveys on this slough have documented a steady decline in trout numbers over the last 12 years. This decline has been attributed to impaired riparian conditions and the loss of instream habitat, primarily as a result of stream flow management that has restricted high spring flushing flows. The slough was traditionally fed by groundwater returning from flood irrigation. As landowners converted from flood to sprinkler irrigation, groundwater inputs decreased and the slough was supplemented with more water from the Beaverhead River to meet water rights. The diverted water deposited sediment into the slough, which filled pools and inundated riffle habitat. To effectively mobilize and transport these fine sediment deposits, a larger head gate at the top of the slough was installed. Appropriately sized channel dimensions were achieved and backwatered reaches were eliminated in most of the project area. However, the lower 2.1 miles of the slough still need to be narrowed, which will allow maintenance of riffle and pool habitat with sediment-flushing flows. The work will occur entirely on FWP fishing access site property. The Future Fisheries Program previously approved $88,643 toward completion of this project, which includes the entire project except for the narrowing of the lower 2.1 miles of stream channel. The applicant is requesting $75,000 in Program funds for habitat enhancement in the lower reaches and intends to provide $484,000 in matching funds for a total project cost of $559,000 (final phase; 87% match).

Amount Requested: $75,000
FWP Recommendation: Revised to $75,000 as other information (including a new budget) was provided.
Project Representative: Matt Yeager, Katie Tackett
Discussion Items:

- Project will have ongoing maintenance.
- There needs to be a flow management plan and the channel needs to be resized.
- The first phase of the project had a large portion paid for by the landowner. Current project location is on a state Fishing Access Site. Future Fisheries funded portions of the previous phases as well.

- Represents a considerable amount of public fishing access.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $75,000.
Motion Made by: Nancy Winslow
Motion Second by: Greg Munther
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $75,000

11) RATTLESNAKE CREEK FISH SCREEN (034-2015). Rattlesnake Creek (Missoula County) is a tributary to the Clark Fork River and contains bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, and mountain whitefish. Within Rattlesnake Creek, several irrigation diversions are active, and most of them are screened. This project addresses the Hughes-Fredline diversion, which currently is unscreened and entrains many salmonids. This project would involve the installation of a rotary-wheel fish screen on the side channel upstream of the ditch to prevent fish entrainment. Additionally, the existing culvert would be replaced and a formal headgate would be installed, allowing water levels to be controlled. The bank would be graded and revegetated. The applicant is requesting $11,685 in Program funds for construction materials and equipment. The applicant intends to provide $15,500 in matching funds, for a total project cost of $27,365. The request represents 43% of the total project cost (57% match).

Amount Requested: $11,865
FWP Recommendation: $11,865
Project Representative: Molly Barth
Discussion Items:

- There is no water right issue; there is only one water user.
- The project will secure passage in the perennial channel.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $11,865.
Motion Made by: Charlie Christman
Motion Second by: Karin Boyd
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $11,865 (RIT)

12) REESE CREEK INSTREAM FLOW ENHANCEMENT (035-2015). Reese Creek (Park County) is a tributary to the Yellowstone River near the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park that supports both a resident population of Yellowstone cutthroat trout at its headwaters and a migratory spawning population that originates in the mainstem Yellowstone River. This project intends to install a pipeline between the existing diversion and intake pond, which would decrease the necessary diverted flow volume and salvage seepage losses, providing additional instream flow to Reese Creek. The goal of this project is to ensure minimum instream flows are available in Reese Creek year-round, which will increase survival of Yellowstone cutthroat trout fry and increase recruitment to the Yellowstone River. The applicant is requesting $55,000 in Program funds for construction materials and plans to contribute

$71,000 in matching funds to the project. The total cost is $126,000. The request represents 43.7% of the total cost (56.3% match).

Amount Requested: $55,000
FWP Recommendation: $55,000
Project Representative: Pat Byorth
Discussion Items:

- The Forest Service was not able to provide any matching funds to the project.
- This is a solid guarantee of adding water into in a stream that needs it.
- The timeline of the implementation of the project is this winter or next year. The engineering component of the project is almost done.
- This project condenses water users.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $55,000.
Motion Made by: Nancy Winslow
Motion Second by: Joseph Willauer
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $55,000 (RIT)

13) SMITH SLOUGH SPAWNING ENHANCEMENT (036-2015). Smith Slough (Madison County) is located approximately 3.5 miles southwest of Twin Bridges and supports rainbow and brown trout. This project involves a 2-mile-long slough channel of the Big Hole River and a 1-mile segment of the connected Smith Ditch. Smith Slough currently comes off the Big Hole River, where it is controlled by a headgate. Downstream of the headgate, the ditch/slough system is split in half, and water is divided between the slough and Smith Ditch. The ditch and slough run parallel for more than a mile before converging and discharging into the Big Hole River. The purpose of this project is to improve wild brown trout and rainbow trout spawning (as well as habitat for adult fish), water quality, and water quantity in the slough and Big Hole River, where there are few spawning tributaries. This project would relocate the headgate and ditch, redirect irrigation return flows away from the slough, narrow and deepen the channel, and realign portions of the ditch and slough. The applicant requests that Program funds be used for the Smith Ditch spawning gravel portion, which involves constructing 1,600 feet of spawning areas in the ditch channel by adding spawning gravel. Subsequently, a water management plan would be developed, and fertilized eggs would be stocked to jump-start the fishery. The applicant is requesting $50,000 in Program funds for the installation of spawning gravel and a headgate in the Smith Ditch, and is contributing $325,995 in matching funds for a total project cost of $375,995. The budget information is incorrect on part II E of the application. The request represents 13% of the total project cost (87% match).

Amount Requested: $50,000
FWP Recommendation: $40,000
Project Representative: Jim Olsen
Discussion Items:

- The landowner is willing to maintain the headgate and adjust flows.

- The landowner is contributing $325,995 to the project. He will pay for the project, but providing these funds will make sure the project will happen as designed.
- There is a lack of young fish in the river, and this project would provide much-needed spawning habitat for the Big Hole.
- Similar projects have successfully increased trout numbers in the Jefferson River.

Motion: Approve the application for the amount of $40,000 as recommended.
Motion Made by: Clint Peck
Motion Second by: Charlie Christman
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $40,000

14) SPOKANE CREEK BRIDGE (037-2015). Spokane Creek (Lewis & Clark County) is a tributary to Hauser Lake in the Missouri River drainage near East Helena. It supports primarily rainbow and brown trout. Prior to spring 2014, the existing bridge was washed out during a high flow event. When a habitat improvement project was completed in spring 2014, a new location for the bridge could not be selected. The applicant is proposing to build a bridge at a more suitable location at an elevation that will adequately pass flooding flows and debris. The goal is to build a new bridge that will reduce the risk of blowout and will not jeopardize stream habitat treatments or infrastructure located downstream. The applicant is requesting $6,600 in Program funds for labor, construction materials, and equipment. They plan to contribute $1,625 in matching funds to the project. The total cost is $8,225. The request represents 80% of the total cost (20% match).

Amount Requested: $6,600
FWP Recommendation: $1,625
Project Representative: None (Michelle McGree)
Discussion Items:

- Bridge portion of previous project (channel reconstruction) was not completed due to the site location, and this project addresses that need. An updated budget sheet and letter was provided by Eric Roberts with an explanation.
- The application should stand alone in terms of its fish habitat improvements.
- Many panel members expressed concern that the project does not have a strong connection to improving fisheries habitat. Question III C was identified as an area where the risk of wash out does not necessarily have a strong connection to improvements in fish populations and/or fishing.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $6,600.
Motion Made by: Nancy Winslow
Motion Second by: Jed Hinkle
Panel Action: Yes (0) / No (9) (Chuck Dalby abstained)
Amount Approved: $0

15) STONEWALL CREEK FISH SCREEN (038-2015). Stonewall Creek (Lewis & Clark County) is a tributary to Keep Cool Creek located near Lincoln and contains westslope cutthroat trout. Near stream mile five, an unscreened irrigation diversion is causing channel impairments and entrainment of cutthroat trout. This project would upgrade the existing diversion with a fish screen and instream cross vane. These upgrades are expected to permit fish passage, bedload movement, and keep fish from entering the ditch. A flat-plate fish screen with a paddlewheel is proposed. The applicant is requesting $13,300 in Program funds for oversight, construction materials, and equipment. They will contribute $25,600 in matching funds, for a total project cost of $38,900. The request represents 34% of the total cost (66% match).

Amount Requested: $13,300
FWP Recommendation: $13,300
Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker
Discussion Items:

- Located at a barrier.
- Current diversion has documented entrainment.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $13,300.
Motion Made by: Clint Peck
Motion Second by: Chuck Dalby
Panel Action: Yes unanimously (Jim Stone abstained)
Amount Approved: $13,300 (RIT)

16) TRAIL CREEK FISH SCREENING AND PASSAGE (039-2015). Trail Creek (Missoula County) is a tributary to Morell Creek near Seeley Lake. Trail Creek supports westslope cutthroat trout, bull trout, and brook trout populations. This proposed project would screen the last of three unscreened diversions within the Trail/Morrell Creek watershed. This diversion entrains trout and acts as an obstruction to upstream fish passage. The current structure is a pin-and-plank check dam and a denil ladder that provides partial fish passage. The goals of this project are to replace the existing diversion structure with a rock cross vane and armored riffle that will allow fish passage, stream channel function, and bedload movement. A McKay-style, flat-plate fish screen with a paddlewheel will be installed with flow measuring devices in each ditch and downstream of the diversion. The applicant is requesting $21,175 in Program funds for oversight, labor, construction materials, and equipment. They will contribute $38,800 in matching funds for a total project cost of $59,975. The request represents 35% of the project cost (65% match).

Amount Requested: $21,175
FWP Recommendation: $21,175
Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker
Discussion Items:

- The fish screens are not maintenance free, but repairs and maintenance will be completed by Trout Unlimited. The fish screen maintenance person, hired by TU, gets the screens running in the spring and winterizes them in the fall.

- The old structure would be removed with an excavator.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the full amount of $21,175.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Joseph Willauer
Panel Action: Yes unanimously (Jim Stone abstained)
Amount Approved: $21,175 (RIT)

17) UPPER LOLO CREEK SEDIMENT REDUCTION (040-2015). The Upper Lolo Creek watershed (Missoula County) is significantly impacted by sediment generated by forest roads and failing culverts. This area is considered important habitat for bull trout, and the project is part of a long-term restoration effort to remove culverts that are fish barriers and reclaim excess forest roads that add sediment to the Upper Lolo Creek system. The project intends to re-contour 12-14 miles of forest roads and remove at least eight culverts, reducing sediment and improving fish passage in the drainage. The culvert removal and fish passage portion of the project is supported by the local fisheries biologist as the most appropriate use of FFIP funds. This is a supplemental application and was partially funded in the last funding cycle. In the winter 2015 funding cycle, the applicant requested $87,000 in Program funds. The project was funded at $43,000 (49.4% of request). The project applicant is requesting $65,000 in equipment costs from FFIP and will be requesting $24,650 in additional funds from DEQ's 319 program to cover a $93,650 funding gap. The applicant reports $116,650 in matching funds (64% match), but without previous FFIP funds, it is a match of $73,650 (41% match). The total project cost is $181,650. The increase in matching funds, in comparison to the previous application, is due to FFIP funding. If this grant request was fully funded, the total FFIP contribution would be $108,000, or 59.4% of the total project.

Amount Requested: $65,000
FWP Recommendation: $44,000
Project Representative: Jed Whiteley
Discussion Items:

- There is $18,000 in-kind money coming from the Forest Service (for the NEPA clearance).
- Decommissioned roads are re-graded. Culvert rehabilitation is site-specific.
- Concern over the recreational value of maintaining some of the roads for public use.
    - There is currently little public use on the roads proposed for decommissioning. The roads were primarily used for logging, not by the general public.
- The culverts are not located on perennial streams.
- Past discussion on whether the panel should just fund the culverts and not the road decommissioning. Was described as a package deal.

Motion: Approve the application for the amount of $44,000 as recommended.
Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby
Motion Second by: Nancy Winslow
Panel Action: Yes (7) / No (3)
Amount Approved: $44,000 (RIT)

18) VAN HOUTEN LAKE FISH BARRIER AND SPAWNING CHANNEL (041-2015). Van Houten Lake (Beaverhead County) is located on the Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest near the town of Jackson in the Big Hole valley. The lake is 12.1 acres in size with a maximum depth of 9 feet. Two spring-fed inlet streams are located on the west and north sides of the lake. The outlet flows to the east and feeds into the Big Hole River approximately 0.5 miles downstream of the lake. Van Houten Lake currently supports a brook trout fishery, but white and longnose suckers are abundant and have contributed to slow growth of fish. The fishery is currently poor, and a recent introduction of burbot has not controlled the sucker population. The goals of this project are to expand the range of Arctic grayling into Van Houten Lake, to establish a lake brood source for westslope cutthroat trout, and to improve the fishery. To complete these goals, the applicant proposes to install a fish barrier in the outlet stream to preclude fish passage and keep non-natives out of the lake. The applicant also proposes to create an outlet spawning channel that will be located above the barrier near the current lake outlet. The applicant is requesting $10,000 in Program funds, and intends to provide $20,000 in matching funds for a total project cost of $30,000. The request represents 33% of the total project cost (66% match).

Amount Requested: $10,000
FWP Recommendation: $10,000
Project Representative: Jim Olsen
Discussion Items:

- The spawning channel does not create passage for the fish.
- The lake is deep enough to contain colder water for fish survival.

Motion: Approve the application as presented for the amount of $10,000.
Motion Made by: Joseph Willauer
Motion Second by: Clint Peck
Panel Action: Yes unanimously (Sen. Jedediah Hinkle abstained)
Amount Approved: $10,000 (RIT)

19) WARM SPRINGS CREEK FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENT (042-2015). Warm Springs Creek (Deer Lodge County) is a tributary to the Clark Fork River, located within the Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest, and contains bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout. An existing culvert is undersized, acts as a velocity barrier for fish, promotes bedload deposition upstream, and increases scour downstream. This project proposes to replace an undersized culvert with a bottomless structural arch culvert. The goals are to replace the structure, thereby allowing unimpeded fish movement throughout much of the Warm Springs Creek headwaters, and increase access to 10 miles of stream habitat. The applicant is requesting $43,250 in Program funds for construction materials and proposes to provide $106,250 in matching funds for a total project cost of $149,500. The total project cost within the application text (section II E) is incorrect. The request represents 29% of the project cost (71% match).

Amount Requested: $43,250
FWP Recommendation: None (lacked proper specifications)

Project Representative: Casey Hackathorne
Discussion Items:

- This project is partly funded by the Natural Resources Damage Program.
- The Forest Service is doing the assessment and design. They have agreed to pay for half of the project.
- Several panel members felt the lack of detail in the application made it difficult to come to a decision and requested another application with greater detail.
    - The applicant stated that tabling the application until December would not hurt the project.

Motion: Motion to table the grant application until December 2015 panel meeting.
Motion Made by: Greg Munther
Motion Second by: Charlie Christman
Panel Action: Yes unanimously
Amount Approved: $0 (tabled)